

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph at page 2, lines 3-14 with the following paragraph:

The user, when postured in a relaxed upright stance, (shown in FIG. 1) as one might stand on a factory floor, causes the spine 14 and the hip 18 to orient in a definable way, defining a sacral angle 20. The sacral angle 20 is the inclined angle that occurs between an imaginary plane 22 that horizontally transverses the hip 18 and a plane 24 aligned with the top of a sacrum 26, a lower portion of the spine 14. For weight bearing purposes, an optimum sacral angle 20 is one that minimizes stress on both the ligaments and the muscles of the lower back. From a biomechanical standpoint an optimum sacral angle 20 is generally considered to be about 30 degrees. A sacral angle 20 less than 30 degrees is caused when the pelvis 16 is rotated back (e.g., in direction of arrow 17); this orientation can place undue stress on the ligaments of the spine 14. In contrast, a sacral angle 20 greater than 30 degrees occurs when the pelvis 16 is rotated forward (e.g., in direction of arrow 19), creating a posture that stresses the muscularity of the back.

Please replace the paragraph at page 11, line 10 to page 12, line 2 with the following paragraph:

The respiratory protection system is generally used in hazardous and contaminated environments, thereby requiring that the belt 38, and other components (e.g., respiratory component 32 and mounting assembly 50) be readily decontaminatable such that it may be reused in further applications. In one embodiment, both the outer layer 116 and the inner layer 118 of the main belt portion 64 are formed from an ethyl vinyl acetate (EVA) co-polymer with a polyolefin elastomer. One suitable EVA is made by Alveo (a Sekisui Company of Luzern, Switzerland). In one embodiment, the outer layer 116 EVA has a density of about 125 kg/m³ and the inner layer 118 EVA has a density of about 70 kg/m³ to about 75 kg/m³. Thereby the outer layer 116 is more rigid than the inner layer 118 to provide rigidity and structure, whereas the inner layer 118 is less rigid and serves as a cushioning inner layer of the main belt portion 64 to provide more comfort to a user. In one embodiment, the outer layer 116 has a thickness of about 3 mm

(in non-embossed areas) and the inner layer 118 has a thickness of about 5 mm. EVA is a decontaminatable material and abrasion resistant, whereby if the main belt portion 64 is damaged (i.e., nicked), it will remain decontaminatable. In further embodiments of the main belt portion 64, the outer layer 116 is formed from a rigid, high density polyethylene (HDPE). In one embodiment, the reinforcement members 120 of the slots 52 are formed from a low density polyethylene, such as an LDPE made by VTS Plastics (Liverpool, UK), having a thickness of about 1.5 mm. The belt 38 typically has a weight of about 240 grams. In further embodiments of the belt 38, the main belt portion 64 is formed from a single, solid layer EVA or a foam surrounded by a polyurethane coated fabric. Whatever material is used to form the main belt portion should be a material that does not readily carry debris or contaminates, or bear a coating thereon having such contaminant resistant characteristics.